

Governor Riley Highlights Success of Highway Safety Programs

Fatalities down to lowest levels in 9 years

MONTGOMERY— Efforts to improve highway safety are working to change driving habits and the number of traffic fatalities is down to their lowest levels in nine years as a result, said Governor Bob Riley.

Numbers from the Alabama Department of Public Safety show that so far this year there have been 123 deaths from crashes on rural roads. That's the lowest number of fatalities year-to-date since 1999, when there were 120 fatalities on rural roads. Crashes are at their lowest level in 12 years.

"What we're doing is working. It's saving lives. Nothing is more important," Governor Riley said during a ceremony where 28 new State Troopers were added to the force. "Our emphasis on safety has helped reduce traffic deaths on rural Alabama roads to their lowest levels in nine years. That's an amazing accomplishment that's truly making Alabama a better place to live. The addition of these new troopers will only help to make our state even safer."

Over the past year, the Alabama Department of Public Safety has worked in conjunction with city and county law enforcement agencies to reduce the number of traffic related fatalities and injuries in a program called "Take Back our Highways." Troopers and other law enforcement personnel have conducted blitzes of the state's interstates, state highways, and county roads in an effort to stop reckless drivers, drunk drivers, and other traffic violators.

So far in 2008, the Department of Public Safety reports that rural traffic crashes are down by 4.5 percent from a year ago – from 7,297 down to 6,965. Injuries are down 11.5 percent, from 3,226 to 2,852, and deaths are down 21.7 percent, from 157 to 123.

"Public Safety is working more efficiently and effectively, and the result is safer roadways. Crashes, injuries and fatalities have been reduced, thanks to Alabama's state troopers," said Colonel J. Christopher Murphy, Director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety.

"Beginning today, these troopers assume an equal responsibility in our work to make Alabama a safer place to drive and live."

Rural Traffic Fatalities, Crashes, and Injuries
January 1 – March 19
2004 – 2008

Traffic Fatalities

<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
133	148	162	157	123

Injuries

<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
3284	3001	3458	3226	2852

Crashes

<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
7145	7074	7395	7297	6965

*Information from AL Department of Public Safety

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For more information, contact the Governor's Press Office at (334) 242-7150.

A roster of the members of Class 2007-C, along with their post and county assignments, follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>County</u>
Brandon R. Bailey	Decatur	Lawrence
Bobby G. Baker	Decatur	Lawrence
Chadwick L. Bright	Montgomery	Montgomery
Donald Butler	Birmingham	Jefferson
Joshua A. Cox	Decatur	Cullman
Kenneth J. Day	Montgomery	Montgomery
Teddy E. Denson	Decatur	Cullman
Nicholas A. Gist	Tuscaloosa	Sumter
Jeffrey S. Grizzard	Gadsden	Etowah
Brett M. Himes	Dothan	Coffee
Thomas A. Hutton	Montgomery	Montgomery
John C. Jones	Tuscaloosa	Tuscaloosa
Christopher Joy	Montgomery	Montgomery

Mary Ann King
Reginal M. King
Jimmy M. Lancaster
Stephen T. Langham
Lee P. Millergren
Carl M. Mitchell
James J. Moore
Justin H. O'Neal
Jonathan H. Ryan
Rafael J. Thomas
Eric L. Tucker
Rodney E. Wallace
Jerry L. Walls Jr.
James E. Williams
Joshua S. Woods

Montgomery
Tuscaloosa
Gadsden
Evergreen
Montgomery
Quad Cities
Birmingham
Tuscaloosa
Decatur
Opelika
Decatur
Decatur
Montgomery
Dothan
Gadsden

Elmore
Tuscaloosa
Etowah
Escambia
Elmore
Lauderdale
Shelby
Tuscaloosa
Morgan
Lee
Morgan
Cullman
Autauga
Dale
DeKalb

Photographs of the new troopers are available on the Department of Public Safety's Web site <http://www.dps.alabama.gov/> under the Service Division link.